
Z-2506

**THE JC HART COMPANY
CUMBERLAND PROPER PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
OR TO PDRS**

**Staff Report
December 12, 2012**

REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, with consent of the owner and represented by attorney Joseph Bumbleburg, is requesting PDRS zoning on approximately 19 acres in the City of West Lafayette for a 266 unit / 497 bedroom apartment complex composed of a variety of housing styles centered on a clubhouse/community building. The property is located on the north side of the existing terminus of Cumberland Avenue near the intersection with US 52, West Lafayette, Wabash 12 (NW) 23-5.

ZONING HISTORY AND AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

The property contains a mix of OR – Office Research and FP – Flood Plain zoning. Surrounding the site are R1 and R1B to the west, PDRS zoning to the south and OR, FP and GB zoning to the east. The most recent rezone petitions in the immediate vicinity were in 2000 for what would become “The Lodge” apartments (Z-1964 PDRS zoning) and in 1999 for the future expansion of the University Inn site (Z-1876 GB zoning), recently renamed “Four Points by Sheraton”.

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

The petitioner’s site is undeveloped and lies at the western edge of the city limits. Land to the north and southwest remains undeveloped. South of the site, across the future Cumberland Avenue extension, is “The Lodge.” Northwest of the site, in unincorporated Tippecanoe County lies the Carrington Estates Subdivision while to the east is the White Horse Christian Center and undeveloped land. Other significant developments nearby, but not immediately contiguous with the subject property, include the Cook Medical building to the north and Wal-Mart to the southeast.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

Petitioner’s property has frontage on Cumberland Avenue, a secondary arterial according to the *Thoroughfare Plan*. Construction on the extension of Cumberland Avenue to the new US 231 is slated to begin in June of 2013. As the project proposes a single entrance into the site off of Cumberland, an area has been reserved in the plans for an inter-parcel connection (by others) with the lot on the east side of the subject property immediately north of the White Horse Christian Center property. A 10-foot asphalt trail extension of the Celery Bog trail is being provided and is proposed to run along the property’s eastern boundary adjacent to the county-regulated drain along with a trail crosswalk across Cumberland Avenue to the existing trail terminus.

With 601 parking spaces distributed among both open surface parking areas and in the various units' garages, the residential parking ratio comes to 1.21 parking spaces per bedroom. There are covered bicycle parking areas proposed that can house up to 47 bicycles and the internal sidewalk and trail connection network is designed to move pedestrians and bicyclists as directly and safely to the vicinity's activity centers as possible.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

City utilities and Indiana American water are available to serve the site. Showing sensitivity to the floodplain areas along the project's eastern boundary, the project is proposing two dry stormwater management ponds that will be augmented with wetland vegetation. Street trees are proposed for the Cumberland Avenue frontage, once the road extension project is completed, and the overall landscaping plan for the project emphasizes buffering along the boundary with Carrington Estates and shading the sidewalks and parking areas throughout the site.

Given its lower-density, suburban character, the project is proposing that 45% of the site remain as pervious open space and the floodplain certification, required to establish the true boundaries of the FP zone through the site, has already been approved. Trash disposal shall be from a centrally located trash compactor that is connected to the internal sidewalk network.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Redevelopment and revitalization of the near-campus/near-downtown areas has been picking up steam. Staff seeks to bring the same level of professional scrutiny and innovation to our suburban areas as staff has brought to those recent urban planned developments. These standards are even more important when the area in question is adjacent to environmentally-sensitive areas like floodplain and the Celery Bog.

In reviewing this proposal, staff saw two opportunities for this project to stand apart from conventional by-right apartment complex development. First, the plan must adhere to best-practices planning and design principles; secondly, it should demonstrate sensitivity to the natural environment and the needs of the pedestrian, bicyclist and transit user.

Relative to the first point concerning best-practices, the project's design team in the early concepts, showed great enthusiasm for employing some of the best planning and design practices. These concepts reimagined the suburban apartment complex as a place that embraces a greater pedestrian orientation. Petitioner shared with staff images and designs of its other projects and showed a willingness to draw from the best parts of these projects in designing Cumberland Proper. They have included a diversity of housing types (from single-level duplexes, to townhouses and cottage-style buildings) with a unique and harmonious architectural theme which emphasizes placing parking behind the buildings so that the fronts of the buildings maintain a pedestrian orientation.

Relative to the second point concerning environmental and pedestrian sensitivity, the project has addressed staff's concerns in the design of the stormwater management ponds and provides a trail extension for the Celery Bog Trail with a connecting trail crosswalk across Cumberland Avenue. The well-designed sidewalk network provides internal connectivity and a planned bus shelter, utilizing the same architectural theme as the project's buildings. The shelter will be constructed along the project's Cumberland Avenue frontage once bus service resumes post-road construction.

Compared to existing by-right apartment complexes, the Cumberland Proper Planned Development has succeeded in fulfilling staff's expectations and has set a new standard for future suburban apartment complex development in our community.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval, contingent on meeting all requirements of UZO 2-28-10 for submission of Final Detailed Plans, signed off by those noted in that section to include:

1. All sheets (other than preliminary plat) that make up the approved Preliminary Plan;
2. PD construction plans per UZO Appendix B2-2;
3. A final plat per UZO Appendix B-3-2 as applicable;
4. Appropriate surety submitted with final detailed plans;
5. Plant schedule approved by the West Lafayette Greenspace Administrator;
6. As conceptually shown on the Preliminary Plan, the owner of the Cumberland Proper Planned Development shall install a trail crosswalk across Cumberland Avenue, with final design and location subject to the approval of the Administrative Officer.
7. Final design of the lighting plan to be included in the Final Detailed Plan submission shall be subject to the approval of the Administrative Officer.
8. Final design of the internal street network for the project to be included in the Final Detailed Plan submission shall be subject to the approval of the Administrative Officer and the West Lafayette Fire Department.
9. A bus shelter, as conceptually shown on the Preliminary Plan, shall be provided along the project's Cumberland Avenue frontage. Final location of the bus shelter along the project's Cumberland Avenue road frontage to be determined by the Administrative Officer of West Lafayette and CityBus working with the owner.